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OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

US Environmental Protection Agency
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EPA-REGION 10

I have lived in the Portland area for 35 years, eventually retiring after 45 years as a pharmacist. The plan to clean up Portland Harbor is based almost entirely on data from 2004, along with a small amount of data from 2008. It does not take into account studies from 2014 showing that the river's natural filtration process has already eliminated 40% of contaminants. Dredging up these buried contaminants would threaten the progress nature has made for no reason at all. An honest and forthright approach would take all the relevant information into account, rather than relying entirely on research from the previous decade. I am afraid the EPA plan, if implemented, would only exacerbate the problem it is intended to solve.

The plan would likely cost over one billion dollars, to be funded by local taxpayers. It would also turn the waterfront into an active construction site for years, and quite possibly decades, which would harm local businesses and increase unemployment. Any damage that has been done to the environment should be corrected, but it should be done in the least intrusive way possible. No responsible cleanup plan would make the situation worse. Other Superfund sites have been cleaned up in much less invasive ways. The EPA should be consistent and apply the same value system to every place it renders judgment upon, rather than discriminating against a particular region.

An solution that is an overreaction can have more consequences than doing nothing at all. We need to be aware of how severe the problem truly is and find the best cost effective solutions based on current data, not information from 10 years ago. As a long time resident, I feel that the local residents' views should be taken into consideration. That being said, I would like to see a more flexible plan that takes the views of Portland residents into account.

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